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A SHORT HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, GATHERED AT NEW-DURHAM, N. H. 1780.

ELDER BENJAMIN RANDEL, of *New-Durham*, (N. H.) being a man of remarkable experience and knowledge in ſpiritual things, and full of zeal for the Lord of hoſts, was reſolved to lay aſide all his prepoſſeſſions, and all the opinions of men, and to read the bible for himſelf; and by that means was ſoon convinced, that GOD's ways are all equal. He therefore objected againſt the whole doctrine of *John Calvin*, with reſpect to eternal, particular, perſonal, unconditional election and reprobation; and propagated the following ideas, viz. 1. That all men have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God. 2. That Jeſus Chriſt has died for all men; and, by the grace of God, hath taſted death for every man. 3. That the grace of God which bringeth ſalvation, hath appeared to all men. 4. That Chriſt's miniſters are commanded to go into all the world, and preach the goſpel to every creature; and that "he that believeth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved, but he that believeth not ſhall be damned." Theſe ideas ſoon alarmed his brethren; and as he was at that time a regular member of a Calviniſtic

Baptiſt Church, and favored of God as a preacher, and no doubt highly eſteemed by many of his brethren, on account of his uſefulneſs; they therefore reſolved to enter into a labor with him, if poſſible to convince him of what they called his *errors*. But having, like Paul, permiſſion to anſwer for himſelf, he was enabled to convince ſeveral of them, of what he called *their errors*. Among thoſe convinced, there were ſeveral goſpel miniſters, who ſought for a more intimate acquaintance with Randel; and after inquiring particularly into his ſentiments, and ſearching the ſcripture for themſelves, they were convinced that theſe things were ſo, or that the things ſpoken by Randel were true.

Elder *Pelatiah Tingley*, of Sanford, (Me.) was one of the firſt of theſe miniſters that were convinced. He was a man of a claſſic education, and underſtood the languages well, and was very uſeful at that time, in inſtructing his brethren, both in public and private. He was a man of few words, but they were like apples of gold in pictures of ſilver—they always weighed heavier than they looked.

Elder *Samuel Weeks*, of Gilmantown, (N. H.) was another that was convinced. And as he had been greatly enſnared by Calviniſm, when he was convinced, became one of its moſt violent oppoſers. When he and Randel came together and preached, it would appear to a candid hearer, by the time they had done, that there was not one whole bone left in the ſkin of what they uſed to call the hydra monſter, *Calviniſm*.

This greatly exaſperated their opponents, who, not knowing what elſe to do, and finding all hope of reclaiming them was gone, threw after them the appellations, *free-willer*, *free-will baptiſt*, *general-proviſion baptiſt*, *open-communion baptiſt*, &c. &c.

Theſe newfaſhioned names, greatly alarmed the people of almoſt every denomination, and raiſed ſuch a ſpirit of envy againſt theſe preachers, that they ſoon began to perſecute them. And theſe harmleſs people found the ſaying of the Apoſtle verified in themſelves, " If any man will live Godly in Chriſt Jeſus, he ſhall ſuffer perſecution." They were frequently reviled and oppoſed in private, and before public aſſemblies; and ſometimes by thoſe who were called the miniſters of Chriſt, and were eſteemed and reverenced by the people as ſuch.

Elder *Benjamin Randel*, at a certain time, being on a journey eaſtward, was deſired by ſome of the people, to preach at a meetinghouſe, not far from Kennebec river. He accordingly made an appointment, and attended at the time. And when he came to the place, found a large congregation of people gathered before the meetinghouſe, and the *parſon of the pariſh* among the reſt, who ſtepped up to Randel, and demanded of him to tell by what authority he did theſe things, and who gave him this authority, viz. to go and appoint meetings in pariſhes which were not his own?

Randel very readily informed him, that he was called and authoriſed of God, to go into all the world, and preach the goſpel to every

creature. The *parſon*, upon hearing this, flew into a paſſion, and demanded of him to work a miracle, as a confirmation of his word. And holding out his horſe whip, and lifting up his voice, with a commanding tone, ſaid, "I demand of you, in the preſence of the congregation, to take this rod and turn it into a ſerpent." A gentleman of the town, who was ſtanding by, anſwered and ſaid, "I gueſs, if he was to, Mr. W—p, you would be the very firſt man that would run from it." By that time the people got into an uproar. Part were for having Randel go into the meeting houſe, and part were for keeping him out. Randel then deſired ſilence, and informed the people, that the Moſt High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; and ſtepping up on a grave, ſaid, "I will have this grave for my pulpit, and the heavens for my ſounding board." He then began to preach to the people, although the parſon, with ſeveral others, went away much diſguſted. Yet many of thoſe who tarried found it to be a time of refreſhing to their ſouls, and went away praiſing God for the glorious truth they had heard.

At another time, he was about to adminiſter baptiſm to a number of candidates, in a place which is now called Philipſburg; and for that purpoſe, they repaired to a ſmall mill pond, it being the moſt convenient place. The man who owned the pond, feeling great oppoſition to Randel, reſolved to deprive him of the privilege of baptizing in it; and therefore ran immediately to his mill, and hoiſted both gates, if poſſible to draw off the water, and ſo to diſappoint him.

Randel obſerving that the water was faſt falling, without knowing the intention of the man, ſaid, " our heavenly Father hath given us ſome water to baptize in, and we muſt improve it while we have it," and then began to baptize. The man finding himſelf diſappointed, ran with great violence to the bridge, and taking up a club in his hand, he threw it at Randel as he was baptizing. But as he threw it, ſome of the people caught hold of his arm and ſtopped its force, ſo that the club fell ſhort of Randel, and dropped into the water. Several clubs were ſent afterwards, and the miſchief was prevented in the ſame manner as before. Randel obſerved that the clubs were falling into the water, but being ſolemnly engaged, he made no inquiry, until the candidates were all baptized ; when coming up out of the water, and ſeeing a tumult among the people on the bridge, he inquired the cauſe of it. Upon which he was informed, that there was a man on the bridge, who had been trying to kill him, while he had been baptizing. Where is the dear ſoul ? ſaid Randel ; let me go and ſpeak to him. Then crowding through the people, he came to the man, and began to addreſs him in the moſt loving manner. But, the man ſeeing Randel, immediately ſetting his brow as braſs, and his neck as an iron ſinew, drew back his arm, and directed his fiſt at Randel's face ; and no doubt the blow would have proved fatal, had it not been for the all-preſerving hand of God through the interference of ſeveral friendly perſons who were ſtanding by, and ſuddenly pulled Randel back out of

the man's reach. "Why did you not let him ſtrike me?" ſaid Randel; "it might have been the means of the converſion of his dear ſoul." Theſe, with many other ſuch like things, he told me he had ſuffered; but want of room forbids the inſertion of any more of them here.

The oppoſition theſe men met with drove them to their cloſets to aſk wiſdom of God, "*who giveth liberally to all men, and upbraideth not*;" and to their bibles, in order to furniſh themſelves with arguments to convince their oppoſers. And as they prayed to God, and read their bibles they found that the old ſaying, "*the bible is a ſealed book*," was nothing but *prieſtcraft*, contrived to keep the people in ignorance and blindneſs, and to make them pay for preaching. They found that the Lion of the tribe of Judah had prevailed to take the book and open the ſeals; and that the bible itſelf is its beſt expoſitor, and uniformly means exactly what it ſays, ſo that "he may run that readeth it." As light increaſed in their minds, they prized the bible higher and higher; they found it to be a perfect rule of faith and practice. And that all other rules invented by men, ſuch as "*articles of faith*," "*church articles*," *books of diſcipline, &c.* were altogether unneceſſary and burdenſome to good people; and the very things which wound Chriſt in the houſe of his friends, and keep the lovers of Jeſus at variance with each other.

Upon this conſideration, this little company of men, together with their little flocks, agreed to lay aſide all ſuch weights, and to take the holy

ſcripture for their only rule of faith and practice; and to believe, preach, practiſe, and deal with each other as they direct. This being done, God began more viſibly to own and bleſs their labours; gave them many ſouls as ſeals of their miniſtry, and as ſtars in their crown of rejoicing. Their ſpeech and their preaching, (to be ſure) was not with enticing words of men's wiſdom, but it was in demonſtration of the ſpirit, and with power; for they commended themſelves to every man's conſcience in the ſight of God. Men, women, and children, were frequently pricked in their hearts under their preaching, and cried out (like thoſe in the apoſtles' day,) men and brethren, what ſhall we do? Souls were frequently convicted and converted under their improvement, and the power of God was wonderfully diſplayed in their meetings. The number daily increaſed, notwithſtanding all the oppoſition they met with from profeſſors and profane. In thoſe days they uſed ſometimes to ſolace themſelves, by ſinging the following lines:

Lord pity outcaſts vile and baſe,
The poor dependants on thy grace,
  Whom *men* diſturbers call.
By ſinners, and by ſaints withſtood;
For theſe too bad, for thoſe too good,
  Condemn'd, or ſhun'd by all.
Though faithful Abraham us neglect,
And though his ranſom'd race elect,
  Agree to give us up;
Thou art our *Father*, and thy name,
For everlaſting is the ſame;
  On thee we build our hope.

About this time ſeveral ſmall churches were gathered, in connection with the church of Chriſt, in New-Durham; *viz.* one in Littlefalls.

Plantation, one in Woolwich, one in Georgetown, one in Edgcomb, and one at a place called Little-River, and one at New-Gloucester, and one in Parsonsfield, (Maine.)

As these men lived at a distance from each other, they found it necessary to meet at stated times, for the purpose of conversing together, and conveying to each other the light which God had communicated to them, so that whatever was communicated to any one of them, was for the benefit of the whole. And if any one had a burden, all helped him to bear it. Those meetings were nurseries of union, knowledge, experience, and practical piety.

The first of those general meetings was holden at a place which is now called Philipsburg, (Me.) December 6th, 1783; and was composed of a number of Elders and brethren, chosen and sent from the several branches of this little brotherhood. Elder *Pelatiah Tingley*, was appointed Clerk, to minute their proceedings. And after solemn prayer to God for blessing and direction, they agreed to go forward in communion of bread and wine, and washing one another's feet. This was a time of refreshing to their souls. Finding such a blessing in their first meeting, they agreed to meet four times in a year, (hence those meetings were called quarterly meetings,) *viz.* at New-Gloucester, the first seventh day of the week in March; at New-Durham the first do. in June; at Woolwich, (Kennebec) the first do. in September; at Littlefalls-Plantation, (now called Philipsburg,) the first do. in December. At this meeting they received *Joseph Jud-*

kins, of Hopkinton, and certified that they thought he had a gift to improve in public. They alſo received and gave certificates to a number of brethren, then living in Dunſton, and ſent a committee to ſet them in order. And after ſetting the church in order at Littlefalls, they wrote a very weighty epiſtle to the churches and congregations, eaſt and weſt; wiſhing them grace, mercy, and peace, and exhorted them to beſtir themſelves, to labour in God's vineyard, to know their lots and abide in them. And as they viewed the fields all white and ready to harveſt, exhorted them to pray for faithful labourers; alſo exhorting watchmen to exert themſelves to the utmoſt for the promotion of Chriſt's glorious and illuſtrious kingdom, until the *ſtone*, cut out of the mountain, ſhould fill the whole earth; alſo earneſtly beſeeching ſinners to be reconciled to God; parents to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; children to obey their parents; huſbands to love their wives, and wives to be in ſubjection to their huſbands, &c. &c.

The appointments of thoſe quarterly meetings, opened a great door for the ſpreading of God's word. Large congregations of people generally attended. And although it was frequently the caſe, that ſome attended through envy, for the purpoſe of diſturbing, contradicting, and oppoſing them; yet they bore theſe things with ſuch patience and fortitude, and at the ſame time endeavouring to explain themſelves in ſuch a plain manner, that it convinced ſome of their moſt violent oppoſers.

Not only this, but the miniſters conſidering themſelves under obligation to attend thoſe meetings, it kept them a great part of their time travelling from one meeting to another; and attending meetings of worſhip every where they went, i. e. where the doors were opened for them: ſo that they were almoſt continually preaching, either publicly, or from houſe to houſe, and were ſcattering the good ſeed almoſt every where. They often went forth weeping, bearing precious ſeed: But they came again with rejoicing, bringing their ſheaves with them.

Their next quarterly meeting was holden at New-Glouceſter, March 6th, 1784, a goodly number attended. They opened their meeting with praiſe and prayer, then received and read ſeveral loving letters of ſalutation from New-Durham, Parſonsfield, & Woolwich, which greatly encouraged them to go on in the ways of the Lord, and to keep up their meetings. Elder *Daniel Hibbard*, was appointed Moderator, and Elder *Job Maccumber*, Clerk—Their firſt buſineſs was, to know if the brethren and ſiſters preſent, were in fellowſhip with each other: and upon examination found a moſt bleſſed union. They then ſat for worſhip. Elder *Benjamin Randel* preached a very weighty, inſtructing, and comforting ſermon, from Pſal. cxxxiii. 1, "*Behold how good, and how pleaſant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.*" This was followed by a number of weighty teſtimonies to the ſame purpoſe, which made the ſcene glorious. Their meeting continued three days; they had a bleſſed ſeaſon in communion; they cloſed the ſcene with an-

other weighty epiſtle to the churches and congregations.

Their next quarterly meeting was holden at New-Durham, June 5th, the ſame year. Elder *Samuel Weeks*, was appointed Moderator, and Elder *Pelatiah Tingley*, Clerk. Their number appeared to be conſiderably increaſed, and the power of God was wonderfully diſplayed in their meeting, both in preaching the word, in the adminiſtration of the Lord's ſupper, and waſhing the ſaints' feet. The letters of ſalutation from the ſeveral churches were refreſhing. The churches in general, appeared to be ſtriving to get into goſpel order; and the miniſters were much engaged to ſet in order thoſe things which were wanting. They were much oppoſed, and ſet at naught, by their adverſaries; but God owned and bleſſed their labours, although they were as yet but a little flock, or as lambs among wolves; the great Shepherd gathered them with his arms, and carried them in his boſom. At that meeting, for ſome reaſon, they found it neceſſary to grant a certificate to the brethren at New-Glouceſter, certifying, that they were a regular *baptiſt church*, and alſo a certificate to Elder *Daniel Hibbard*, certifying that he was a regular ordained miniſter.

It appears that at that time, they made no uſe of the terms *Freewiller*, *Freewill-baptiſt*, &c. They conſidered their ſeveral branches, as ſo many churches of Chriſt, and yet collectively they conſidered themſelves but one church of Chriſt, and owned the name *baptiſt* only as a term of diſtinction, to diſtinguiſh themſelves

from their oppreſſors, who were annually impo-ſing miniſterial taxes upon them contrary to their conſciences; and often diſtreſſing their families, and ſometimes dragging them to *priſon*, or obliging them to get certificates to ſhew that they were not of their ſect, *viz.* That they were not of what they uſed to call *the good old ſtanding order*. But ſo good as they were, (after the people had certificates) they were never ſo good as to pay back the money, which they had taken by force from thoſe people. That was all kept, perhaps hundreds of dollars, firſt and laſt. However, I think it probable that ſuch money had not proſpered very well with them; and the people from whom it was taken, have made out very well without it; having taken joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods.

Their next quarterly meeting was holden at Edgcomb, (Kennebec) September 4th, the ſame year. Elder *Benjamin Randel*, was appointed Moderator, and *Ebenezer Brookings*, Clerk. They received letters, and verbal accounts from the ſeveral churches, and found them in general well engaged, though in ſome places they were rather low. They had a refreſhing ſeaſon in doing their buſineſs, and alſo in meetings of worſhip, adminiſtration of the Lord's ſupper, &c. But as the people called *Shakers*, were endeavouring at that time to make inroads upon them, and had ſucceeded in ſeveral places, and had drawn away a number after them. They therefore, agreed to hold a day of faſting on the 13th of the enſuing October, and proclaimed the ſame in their general epiſtle in the follow-

ing words : " Under a deep and ſorrowful conſideration how prevalent errors of every kind are, in this our day ; we agree, and moſt earneſtly recommend to our chriſtian friends, to keep Wedneſday, the 13th day of October next, as a day of faſting, with prayer to almighty God, for Jeſus Chriſt's ſake, to ſcatter and conſume this ſmoke, with the breath of his mouth and brightneſs of his appearing, and unwind ſatan, in all his ſerpentine windings and deluſive charms, and ſhortly bruiſe him under us."

This faſt was attended, and it is likely that their prayers were heard and anſwered, for all the difficulty ſoon ſubſided, and thoſe people made no more inroads upon them.

Their next meeting was holden at Littlefalls Plantation, Dec. 7th, the ſame year. Elder Pelatiah Tingley was appointed moderator, and George Philbrick, clerk. The letters of ſalutation to this meeting were full of fervent prayers for grace, mercy, and peace, for the whole Iſrael of God ; and with pathetic exhortations to miniſters and people to ariſe and ſhine, and live prepared for the coming of Jeſus.

Their union increaſed from meeting to meeting, as they became more and more acquainted with each other. The watchmen began more than ever to ſee eye to eye, and to lift up their voice together ; and the brethren ſeemed reſolved to cleanſe the houſe.

At this meeting they rejected *John Gordan*, of Littlefalls, from their fellowſhip and memberſhip, for his immoral conduct, and noted him in their general epiſtle.

In the year 1785, their quarterly meetings in March, June, and September, were holden in their usual places. The brethren in general appeared to be stedfast, and abounding in the work of the Lord, excepting the church at a place called Little River, (Me.) In this place, what they called the *predestinarian plan*, got in among them. And they disputed so long about decrees, purposes, foreordination, predestination, eternal, particular, personal election, and what they called the final perseverance of the saints, that many of them lost the life and power of religion. And when they had disputed till they were all sick and tired of it, all that they made out, that might be depended on, was simply this, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." And in their letter of salutation to the June quarterly meeting, said, that they "would to God, that all beliefs, but a belief on Jesus, as the scripture hath said, *were rooted out of the world.*"

In Georgetown, (Kennebec) they experienced a blessed revival the same year. The ordained ministers were few in number, but they were very industrious, and travelled from town to town, preaching the word. They were very careful to attend those quarterly meetings; and I think it probable, that, like Moses, they had a respect unto the recompence of reward. For according to their minutes, they never failed of having the sensible presence of their Master Jesus at those meetings.

At their September quarterly meeting, which was holden at Edgcomb, (Kennebec) they examined and ordained Elder *John Whitney*. He

was an uſeful brother. He travelled almoſt all his time. God bleſſed his labors, and gave him many ſouls as ſeals of his miniſtry. But he met with a great deal of difficulty, by reaſon of men of other denominations creeping into his labors, and making ſplits and diviſions among the young brethren, (and as it were trying to divide the living child). Sometimes, he would rather give them all up, than to have them divided. One day, a man who was an enemy to Whitney, aſked a very noted Calviniſt baptiſt miniſter, if he knew a man by the name of John Whitney? Yes, replied he, very well; he is a precious child of God. Do you think, ſir, ſaid the man, that Whitney is qualified to preach the goſpel? O yes, ſays the miniſter, I have no doubt of that; I have a great many precious brethren and ſiſters in my church, who were converted under his improvement. It may be obſerved of ſome miniſters, that a reformation generally follows them; & of others, *that they generally follow the reformation.*

At this September meeting, they ſent another very weighty epiſtle to the churches and congregation. Alſo, ſent a committee to viſit the church at Little River, to aſſiſt them in their weak and ſcattered ſituation. Their viſit was attended with good effect; and they cloſed the meeting by ſinging the following lines:

All glory be given to Jeſus our King,
His preſence is heaven, it makes angels ſing;
We would join in their lays, and pray we may give
Him eternal praiſe, with millions who live.
In the heaven of heavens, in the manſions above,
With their ſins all forgiven, immerſed in love,
To join with their lyre, and extol his great name,
Is all our deſire, for Chriſt's ſake—Amen.

Their December quarterly meeting, (by a previous appointment) was holden at Gorham, December 3d, 1785. Their meeting opened by prayer, praiſe, &c. Elder Daniel Hibbard was appointed moderator, and Elder Pelatiah Tingley, clerk. They received and read a number of loving letters of ſalutation from the ſeveral churches in the brotherhood, which contained many fervent prayers that the Lord would viſit his bride, and cauſe that travailing pangs might be in Zion; that children might be born to God; that ſatan's kingdom might fall; and Chriſt's kingdom be built up; with much exhortation to the brethren, freely to wear out their mortal bodies in the ſervice of Jeſus Chriſt. The churches generally complained of having many adverſaries, but bleſſed God for the union they felt to Chriſt, and to one another.

At this meeting, they agreed to admit to their communion, all ſuch perſons as give a ſatisfactory evidence that they are united to Chriſt by a living union with him. Then Samuel Thombs, and James Mc Corſon, of Gorham, with twenty others, unitedly came forward, and joined them in their quarterly meetings. This was a time of refreſhing from the preſence of the Lord. They then ſung the following hymn, compoſed by Elder Benjamin Randel:

If we indeed, are what we ſay,
All followers of the Lamb;
All children of the glorious day,
May love our ſouls inflame.

Love, only love, in word and tongue,
Can e'er endure the fire;
We all muſt bear the teſt ere long—
In love, O be entire.

Love then, O love the lovely One
Whom love brought from above,
Who bled to raiſe us to a crown,
That we may ſwim in love.

Love, love, pure love fulfils the law,
Love purifies the heart;
Love will us into union draw,
Love will not let us part.

O love!—My brethren, let us love,
And ſhow the world that we
Are travelling to the world above,
All bound in unity.

Love, all the hoſts above inſpires,
In love they all agree;
To live in love be our deſires,
And love eternally.

In the year 1786, there was nothing very extraordinary took place; their meetings were regularly attended, and they enjoyed refreſhing ſeaſons at their quarterly meetings, both in preaching the word, and in the adminiſtration of the Lord's ſupper, &c. Committees were choſen and ſent from thoſe meetings, to viſit the churches, to aſſiſt them in their labours where ſuch aſſiſtance was thought neceſſary, or called for by the churches. In the church at New-Glouceſter, there was a great declenſion: they got into a low and ſcattered ſituation, ſo that the brethren at their quarterly meeting in March, found it neceſſary to lay the church under admonition.

At their June quarterly meeting, which was holden at New-Durham, June 3d, 1786, they had a good ſeaſon, and found a bleſſed union among themſelves, and ſent a very loving letter of ſalutation to the *New-Hampſhire aſſociation*, wiſhing them proſperity in every thing which

is for God's glory, and the good of precious ſouls; that all ſtumbling-blocks might be removed out of the way; that all ſhineſs, evil ſurmiſing, evil thinking, &c. might be expelled on both ſides from every heart; exhorting all to lay aſide every weight, and to work while the day laſts; to labor wholly for God and his cauſe; to be exceeding careful in thought, word and action, ſo as in no wiſe to ſtain the character of the glorious Jehovah, "Who will have all men to be ſaved and come to the knowledge of the truth;" teſtifying that their doors had been, and were ſtill open to the meſſengers of the meek and lowly Jeſus, of whatever name. Alſo declaring that they prayed for, and rejoiced in the advancement, reign and promotion of the cauſe of the King of kings, and Lord of lords, &c. But I cannot find on the records any anſwer from the *aſſociation* to them, and I think it likely that the *aſſociation* did not ſee fit to ſend them one.

At their September meeting, which was holden at Edgcomb September 2d, the ſame year they had a very ſolemn ſeaſon. They found the churches in general very well engaged; but that a number of individuals had got to be diſorderly, which laid them under the neceſſity of appointing brethren to go from place to place to viſit and labour with thoſe diſorderly walkers. And painful as it was to their tender feeling hearts, they were conſtrained (by love to their precious ſouls and the cauſe God,) to lay ſeveral of their profeſſed brethren under admonition.

In thoſe days where the churches were ſmall, and the brethren young, when any brother or ſiſter in the church, was in any reſpect diſorderly, they thought they had ſomething more to do than to blot their names out of a paper, or to vote them out of the church; neither were they of the opinion of ſome, that let them do as bad as they *would*, and go as far as they *could*, "The LORD would bring them back again;" and that though they fall foully, they ſhall not fall finally: but they thought, if any one erred from the truth and one converted him, that the one that converted the ſinner from the error of his way, ſhould ſave a ſoul from death, and hide a multitude of ſins. They conſidered the members of the church, as ſo many members of the body; that they were all neceſſary and uſeful in their ſeveral places; if one of thoſe members ſuffered, all the members ſuffered with it; if one of the members was honored, all the members rejoiced with it. When any member of the church, got out of joint any way, or diſordered by any means, the brethren ſpared no pains or coſt to get the member into place, or to have the diſorder healed. Therefore, as ſoon as they had information that any brother or ſiſter had erred from the truth, the firſt thing was to go and ſee them, talk and pray with them, and exhort them to confeſs and forſake their ſins. If that would not do, they would two or three go and labour in the ſame manner; and if that would not reclaim them, then they would call their little church together, and let all the brethren try; and if the tranſgreſſing brother or ſiſter remained impeni-

tent, they would go to the next quarterly meeting and requeſt help; then a number of the moſt diſcerning and ſkilful brethren muſt be ſent to aſſiſt them in labouring with ſuch impenitent, diſorderly brethren. If thoſe members ſtill remained obſtinate, the brethren would then lay them under a written admonition, and ſend them a letter full of heart-felt, heart-melting expreſſions; and then a ſecond upon the back of it, in the name of the quarterly meeting, "*Line upon line; Precept upon precept;*" and good faithful brethren every time to bear the letters, to labour with them. And if after all theſe trials and labours, they ſtill remained diſorderly, and it appeared neceſſary that ſuch members ſhould be cut off; that the body was in danger by their ſtaying on any longer; then with much weeping and heart-aching, a letter of rejection was ſent.

This method of labouring with diſorderly brethren was indeed coſtly and painful; but where they thought that the ſalvation of a ſoul was depending on their faithfulneſs, they did not value the coſt or pains; for they concluded, that if they reclaimed them, there would be more joy in Heaven, over one ſuch repenting ſinner, than over ninety and nine juſt perſons, who need no repentance. And beſides, this method of laboring, proved very affecting in general; ſometimes they would gain them the firſt time, ſometimes the ſecond, ſometimes the third, and ſometimes at the very laſt, they would repent, return, confeſs, and forſake; and give ſuch ſatisfaction to their brethren, as would more than compenſate them for all their labors. [*To be Continued.*]

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

An account of late reformations, & revivals of religion.

A very glorious reformation took place in the town of *Saco* in the year 1808, at a quarterly meeting which was holden in that place, on the Saturday after the third Wednesday in August. This meeting was composed of four ordained ministers, viz. *Tingley*, *Buzzell*, *Leach*, and *Hobbs*, and a very large number of praying brethren and sisters. Being assembled, we were convinced that the people could not be made comfortable in any building in that place, and knowing that the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands, we repaired to a grove where convenient seats were prepared under the shade of the spreading branches of the trees. The people were in number about two thousand. The exercise began with praise and prayer, followed by solemn and weighty exhortation to the people to wait on the Lord. We then called for, and heard a refreshing report from the several churches, with some affecting accounts of revivals of religion in several places. This was followed again with much exhortation to the people, to seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near. The people appeared very solemn, and gave heed to the things which were spoken to them. After a short intermission, we sat for worship, which began with singing and prayer. After which a sermon was delivered by one of the ministers, in which he endeavoured to shew men their de-

plorable condition while in a ſtate of alienation from God, and their utter inability to deliver themſelves from that ſtate, by any thing that they could do of themſelves. But told them that God had ſo loved the world, that he had given his Son Jeſus Chriſt to bleed, groan, and die for them; that by his propitious death, he had rendered their ſins pardonable, and their ſouls ſalvable, that he had ſent his holy ſpirit to teſtify of himſelf, & to reprove the world of ſin, righteouſneſs and judgment; and withal how able, willing, and ready this bleſſed Jeſus is to receive, forgive, and ſave the chief of ſinners when they repent, believe and ſubmit themſelves to him. This alſo was followed by a number of weighty exhortations, from both male and female. Toward the cloſe of the exerciſes, a little boy about twelve years old, being deeply impreſſed with a ſenſe of the dangerous ſituation ſinners were in, aroſe and in a powerful and perſuaſive manner, entreated them to "flee from the wrath to come." This ſtruck the congregation in a very ſolemn manner, and ſinners began to fall under the power of God. The meeting continued two days, in which time ſeveral powerful and inſtructing ſermons were delivered, and many exhortations, with fervent prayers to God for the outpouring of his ſpirit and for an ingathering of ſouls. The ſcene was truly glorious; the miniſters alternately preaching; the ſaints witneſſing to the ſolemn truth and unitedly imploring the divine benediction on the congregation; a viſible concern appearing all the while on the minds of poor ſinners

On the evening of the ſecond day, ſome ſouls were brought to rejoice in the Lord, and the work began to ſpread in a wonderful manner. The next day almoſt every houſe in the vicinity was filled with the cries of ſinners begging for mercy. Young men and maidens, old men and children, were the ſubjects of the work. This was "noiſed abroad, and the multitude came together." The people flocked from every direction, to ſee and hear the young converts, who ſtruck the ſpectators with amazement. Many of them were convinced that this was the work of God, and cried out ſaying, "this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes." There was ſome oppoſition, but the oppoſers were almoſt aſhamed to ſhew their heads. The ſerpent was obliged to go upon his belly and eat duſt. In the day time they aſſembled in the grove, and in the evening they met in private houſes. The people had but little time, or deſire, to eat, drink, or ſleep. The work continued in this powerful manner about three weeks, in which time the above named miniſters made them ſeveral viſits, and perſuaded them to continue in the grace of God. About one hundred and fifty ſouls were hopefully converted in the time of the work. Forty one perſons were baptized at one time by Buzzell and Hobbs. The baptiſm was performed in the following manner, viz. the candidates were examined in the grove, then walked about a mile and a half to the water. The number of the people attending was about ſixteen hundred; ſome in

carriages, ſome on horſeback, and others on foot. The candidates, and almoſt the whole company of the diſciples, walked in the centre, with their books open in their hands, ſinging the praiſes of God. The adminiſtrators rode in the rear. The ſcene was ſolemn; the ſpectators were ſilent, and many of them mourning for their ſins. There was nothing to be heard but the high praiſes of God ſounding from the mouths of thoſe new born ſouls. When they came to the water, the people ſituated themſelves in a circular form, round about the place deſigned for baptiſm. The adminiſtrators kneeled down in the centre of the candidates, and prayed to God to grant his aſſiſtance, that his Spirit might reſt upon both adminiſtrators and candidates, and that a holy ſolemnity might reſt upon every ſpectator. The adminiſtrators then proceeded to the water, with each a candidate by the hand, leading them down into the water, where they baptized them "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt," each pronouncing the ceremony at a time; and thus they proceeded until the whole were baptized, which was performed in about forty minutes. Nothing could have been more ſolemn or affecting, than to ſee the people gathering to the ſpiritual Shiloh; the miniſters of Chriſt engaged in preaching the word, and baptizing believers, i. e. burying them with Chriſt by baptiſm. And then to ſee thoſe obedient believers riſing from their watery graves, ſhouting the praiſes of Immanuel; this cauſed the

old ſaints to triumph, and give glory to God, ſaying, " this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

Forty-nine have been baptized ſince, and appear in general to be walking in goſpel order.

This reformation extended to ſeveral other towns, and ſoon after broke out in the town of *Standiſh*, through the inſtrumentality of a little girl, who had been converted at Saco, in the time of this reformation. This child had it on her mind to be baptized, and had the ordinance adminiſtered by Elder Z. Leach. When ſhe related her experience, it was ſo remarkable, that it ſtruck a number of perſons at the water, who began ſoon to feel their need of religion, and to ſeek for an intereſt in Chriſt. From this the work began to ſpread in a very rapid manner, until it ſpread over a conſiderable part of the town of Standiſh, and almoſt all over the town of Gorham, adjoining. The work continued, and the reformation ſpread, until about *two hundred and fifty* ſouls were hopefully converted there. I underſtand that about *one hundred and fifty* perſons have ſince been baptized by Elders Z. Leach and S. Hutchinſon.

This glorious work alſo ſpread into the town of *Raymond*, and began to break out at the time of the quarterly meeting which was holden in that town in the month of May, A. D. 1809, compoſed of a number of Elders, viz. Tingley, Buzzell, Leach, Marſhel, Parcher, and S. Hutchinſon. A large number of brethren gathered from various parts. Being aſſembled, the power

of God defcended on the congregation in a wonderful manner. After hearing refreſhing reports from the ſeveral churches, we adjourned buſineſs, and ſat for worſhip. After prayer, a ſhort ſermon was delivered by one of the Elders, which was quickening to the ſaints, and awakening to ſinners. On the evening of the firſt day, the brethren retired to private houſes and held prayer meetings. On the ſecond day, the aſſembly was large. The people were very deſirous to hear the word, and as the meeting-houſe could not hold them, it was deſired that there might be preaching out of doors. Accordingly two of the Elders, viz. Buzzell and Marſhel, left the houſe; and being ſituated on a large rock, they preached unto the people. The power of God was wonderfully diſplayed; ſinners began vocally to cry for mercy. A number of ſouls were hopefully converted before the meeting cloſed, and a number more went away mourning for their ſins. From this the work ſpread glorioufly, and in a ſhort time about ſeventy ſouls were brought out of darkneſs into God's marvellous light, and praiſed God for the wonders of redeeming love. Between thirty and forty have ſince been baptized, and in general remain ſtedfaſt in the doctrine of Chriſt. Elder Z. Leach, who reſides in the town, has been a principal inſtrument in the hand of God of this glorious work.

A number of perſons who were inhabitants of the towns of Gray and New-Glouceſter, by means of attending this quarterly meeting at

Raymond, and a quarterly meeting which was holden at Durham, in the month of Auguſt following, were ſtruck under a ſerious concern for their ſouls, and were ſoon after brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

The reformation began to ſpread in thoſe towns, about the laſt of Auguſt, in a glorious manner; and continued through the months of September, October, November, and December; in which time it ſpread through the weſterly part of Newglouceſter, and generally thro' the town of Gray. A very large number have been converted in theſe towns; perhaps ſome over an hundred ſouls have had a new ſong put into their mouths. This reformation alſo extended into the town of Poland, and a large number have been converted there. This work went on, generally, without the inſtrumentality of public preachers. The brethren met together and improved their gifts, and found that by waiting on the Lord, they renewed their ſtrength. Their meetings were carried on by praiſe, prayer, and exhortation. The meetings were very ſolemn, and the reformation carried inconteſtible evidence of its being the work of God. I have been informed that a number of perſons, who have been great advocates of the famous doctrine generally known by the name of *univerſaliſm*, have been thoroughly convinced that their doctrine is falſe; have willingly given it up, and joyfully embraced the doctrine of Chriſt. And by their lives and converſation,

it manifeſtly appears that they have made an excellent exchange. Several miniſters viſited them in the reformation, and encouraged them to go on in the work of the Lord, and baptized a number. Elder E. Stinchfield, (who reſides in Newglouceſter) returned home about the firſt of October. He continued with them for ſeveral months, preaching and baptizing. I underſtand that the greateſt part of thoſe converts have been baptized, and continue ſtedfaſt in the apoſtles' doctrine, &c.

About the firſt of September, 1809, a reformation began in the ſouth part of *Parſonsfield*, and about twenty ſouls were hopefully converted in the courſe of a few weeks. Several alſo were baptized.

About the firſt of January, 1810, it began on the north ſide of the town. The firſt appearance of this reformation was at an evening meeting which was holden at my houſe. At this meeting, ſeveral young people were ſtruck with a ſolemn ſenſe of their undone condition. The next evening, we had a meeting at brother B–s, where the power of God was wonderfully diſplayed, and ſeveral ſouls experienced religion for the firſt time. The firſt that was brought to rejoice in the Lord, was a little girl about eleven years of age. She aroſe and praiſed God in a wonderful manner, and the example was ſoon followed by a number of her companions. And we found the ſaying of the Pſalmiſt verified, where he ſaith, " out of the mouths of babes

and ſucklings, thou haſt perfected praiſe." The ſcene was truly glorious. It was

> " Young heaven on earthly ground,
> " And glory in the bud."

The exhortations and prayers of theſe children ſtruck many more, who went away mourning for their ſins.

Our third meeting was holden at the ſame houſe, which was ſtill more powerful. Seventeen ſouls were hopefully converted, and the work ſtill ſpread. In the courſe of eight days from the time the work began, *forty-three* experienced a change of heart, and were brought to rejoice in the Lord. In a few weeks the reformation ſpread ſeveral miles, and extended into the towns of Corniſh and Eſſingham, until about *two hundred* ſouls were hopefully brought out of darkneſs into God's marvellous light.

The ſubjects of this work were men, women, and children, of all ranks. The effect of the work was, to turn them from ſin to holineſs, and from the ſervice of ſatan, to the ſervice of the living and true God.

The perſons engaged to encourage and aſſiſt in this work, were the good people of all denominations. The only perſons who oppoſed the work, were GOG and MAGOG, viz. the enemies of Liberty and Equality ; or, in more explicit terms, the Drones of Society, i. e. the perſons who wiſh to live wholly on the earnings of others. Theſe were very much oppoſed to the reformation. They called it *deluſion*, *enthuſi-*

asm, &c. &c. But let it be remembered, that while the people were living in sin, houses prayerless, young people frolicing, dancing, carousing, swearing, drinking, &c. these men were mightily pleased. Sabbath-day go to meeting; read over a short lecture upon Morality's skeleton, fifteen or twenty minutes long; and sometimes say over a studied prayer, made up of ambiguous expressions, full of impiety, and sedition against the rulers and government of a free and independent nation: in the intermission make politics the theme, and the well meaning people are often duped, blinded, and stirred up to oppose a good and wholesome government, under which we enjoy the greatest privileges of any nation under heaven. This is what such men call *good order in town*. But when ministers hold up the necessity of repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and the people repent and believe the gospel; when parents begin to pray in their families; bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; husbands love their wives, and wives reverence their husbands; and the young people, instead of frolicing, meet together to worship God—this is called *delusion*. But we must leave the candid to judge for themselves, which of the two looks the most like delusion.

The whole number of those who have professed to experience a change of heart, in the above account, is about *nine hundred*, in a little over two years, and the reformation is still going on.

In the towns of Limerick and Limington, a goodly number have very lately experienced religion for the firſt time; others have been reclaimed from their wanderings. The work is glorioufly ſpreading; ſouls are flocking to the Redeemer's kingdom, and praiſing God for redeeming love.

The reformation is very marvellous in many other places in the Diſtrict of Maine; alſo in the States of New-Hampſhire and Vermont, which I ſhall give a particular account of in the next number. As I know that all the lovers of Jeſus are conſtantly praying for the conviction and converſion of their fellow creatures, the ſpread and advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, and are waiting to hear of the anſwer of their prayers, and always feel to congratulate each other on the arrival of the glorious news; I will here ſay, for the encouragement of their longing ſouls, that *King Jeſus* rides proſperouſly upon the word of meekneſs and truth. His arrows are remarkably ſharp in the hearts of many of his enemies. Zion travels and brings forth her children. The devil's kingdom is daily depopulating. Myſtery Babylon, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth, is trembling; and it is hoped that the time is not very far diſtant, when the waiting poſts ſhall be furniſhed with the long expected news, "Babylon is fallen! Babylon is fallen!"

My brethren in the miniſtry appear at preſent to be well engaged in the work of the Lord. They go forth weeping, bearing precious ſeed, and

come again with rejoicing, bringing their ſheaves with them. God is daily bleſſing their labors, and giving them ſouls as ſeals of their miniſtry, and as ſtars in their crown of rejoicing. The churches in general appear to be determined not to ſtrive about *words* to no profit, but to lay aſide every weight, and to run the race ſet before them with patience, looking ſingly unto Jeſus. And I have not a ſhadow of doubt but that the battle will go ſore againſt the Lord's enemies.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Yearly Meeting at Parsonsfield.

The Elders and Brethren of the Church of Chriſt aſſembled in yearly meeting at Parſonsfield, (Maine) November 3d, 1810; and after ſolemn prayer, praiſe, and many weighty exhortations, we proceeded to buſineſs: and 1ſt, chooſe Elder Z. Leach, to govern the meeting; and Elder Simeon Dana, Clerk. 2d, Called for reports from the ſeveral quarterly meetings, and found them to be very refreſhing to our ſouls. A large number of miniſters and public exhorters were preſent; they ſpake one by one as they felt moved by the ſpirit of God, and the day was ſpent in that manner; the congregation was large, appeared very ſolemn, and a great

tenderneſs appeared on the minds of many. In the evening, meetings were holden in different parts of the town. On the next day, it being the firſt day of the week, meetings of worſhip were holden in Parſonsfield, at the North and South meeting houſes, and at the meeting houſe in Effingham. A large gathering of people attended at the North meeting houſe in Parſonsfield, and the power of God was preſent to heal; a ſermon was delivered in the forenoon by Elder H. D. Buzzell, and in the afternoon by Elder S. Hutchinſon. The ſcene was glorious; the miniſters appeared like a flame of fire; their doctrine dropped like the rain, and their ſpeech diſtilled like the dew; ſaints rejoiced, ſinners trembled, backſliders mourned, and the moſt beautiful order was obſerved through the whole.

Nov. 5th. The Elders aſſembled at the dwelling houſe of Dea. Samuel Moulton, and ſat for conference. After joining in ſolemn prayer to God for wiſdom, we attended to buſineſs, and converſed on many things which we hope will be for the glory of God, and for the good of his Church; found a moſt bleſſed union in our hearts, thoughts, words, and motives, both with reſpect to doctrine and diſcipline. Love filled all our ſouls, eſpecially while we heard a young brother relate his experience and call to the work of the miniſtry. The evening ſeemed to reſemble that evening when anciently "the diſciples were gathered together, the doors being ſhut, Jeſus appeared in the midſt."

The meeting closed by singing the following Hymn:

1 From whence doth this love and this union arife,
Which knits and so faftens our fouls in fuch ties;
That hatred and malice are conquered by love,
So that nature nor diftance thefe ties can remove?

2 In the garden of nature it cannot be found,
It grows and increafes on Immanuel's ground:
From the veins of the Saviour it flows ever fweet,
And we drink it moft plenty at Jefus' feet.

3 When in heavenly places together we fit,
Where the elders, and brethren, and fifters are met,
This love glows fo fweetly in every heart,
We feel fo united we're loth for to part.

4 The time fo unnoticed pafleth away,
We fcarcely can mifs a whole night or a day;
The union we feel, and the love here enjoy'd,
Are fuch that our fouls can never be cloy'd.

5 We preach, and we pray, and we talk, and we fing,
And tell our experience again and again;
We talk about parting, but ftill we remain
In love fo united, we cannot contain.

6 Each brother and fifter their tythes muft bring in,
Each one then doth tell of fome wonderful thing;
Our love then increafes to a glorious flame,
And we give all glory to GOD and the LAMB.

lowing